



E1-1720  
(1)

500 Water Street - J200  
Jacksonville, FL 32202  
Phone: (904) 359-1086  
FAX: (904) 359-1111  
E-Mail: Dave\_Geraci@CSX.com

Dave Geraci  
Manager - Network Rationalization

September 21, 2005

U.S. EPA - Region 2  
290 Broadway,  
New York, NY 10007-1866

RE: CSX Transportation, Inc.  
Proposed Abandonment  
Docket No. AB-55 (Sub. No. 663X)



Dear Gentlemen:

Please be advised that on October 14, 2005, CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) expects to file with the Surface Transportation Board ("Board") a Notice of Exemption seeking authority to abandon 1.1 miles of railroad from Railroad Milepost 1.5 to the end of track at Railroad Milepost 2.6 near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York.

Attached is a preliminary Environmental Report describing the proposed action and any expected environmental effects. We are providing this report so that you may review the information that will form the basis for the Board's independent environmental analysis of this proceeding. Before this Report is finalized and submitted to the Board, we will incorporate into it any comments that we receive from you. Your comments will be considered by the Board in evaluating the environmental impacts of the contemplated action. If any of the information is incorrect, if you believe that pertinent information is missing, or if you have any questions about the Board's environmental review process, please contact the Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA), Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423, telephone (202) 565-1545 and refer to the above Docket Numbers. Because the applicable statutes and regulations impose stringent deadlines for processing this action, your comments to SEA (with copy to me) within three weeks would be appreciated.

If there are any questions concerning this proposal, please contact me directly by telephone at (904) 359-1086, or by mail at the above address.

Sincerely,

Attachment

Copy:

Surface Transportation Board  
Section of Environmental Analysis  
1925 "K" Street NW - Suite 534  
Washington, DC 20423-0001

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## ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

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CSX TRANSPORTATION, INC.

STB DOCKET AB-55 (SUB-NO. 663X)

The following information is provided in accordance with 49 C.F.R. Section 1105.7:

### **(1) PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

**Describe the proposed action, including commodities transported, the planned disposition (if any) of any rail line and other structures that may be involved, and any possible changes in current operations or maintenance practices. Also describe any reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. Include a readable, detailed map and drawings clearly delineating the project.**

CSX Transportation (CSXT) proposes to abandon 1.1 miles of rail line between from Railroad Milepost 1.5 to the end of track at Railroad Milepost 2.6 near Watertown in Jefferson County, New York. This line has not generated any originating or terminating traffic in over three years. Various commodities had been shipped over this line segment throughout its use. However, no future rail traffic is expected.

Abandonment of this line will result in the removal of the rail, crossties, and possibly the upper layer of ballast; subsequently, the operations and maintenance of this line will cease.

The only alternative would be not to abandon and to pass the opportunity costs of retaining the line to all other CSXT customers. This would not be a prudent utilization of carrier resources.

Two maps, which delineate the proposed project, are attached. (See Attachments 1 and 2.)

### **(2) TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

**Describe the effects of the proposed action on regional or local transportation systems and patterns. Estimate the amount of traffic (passenger or freight) that will be diverted to other transportation systems or modes as a result of the proposed action.**

There is no CSXT passenger or freight traffic on this line. There will be no effect on existing regional or local transportation systems or patterns.

**(3) LAND USE**

- (i) Based on consultation with local and/or regional planning agencies and/or a review of the official planning documents prepared by such agencies, state whether the proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans. Describe any inconsistencies.**

Applicant has not received a response to its inquiry dated September 6, 2005 to the Jefferson County Planning Department, Watertown Planning Department, Pamela Planning Department and the Village of Glen Park Planning Department seeking information regarding this statement. (See Attachments 3, 4, 5 and 6.)

Based on the fact that the line has not generated any traffic in over three years, Applicant believes the proposed action is not inconsistent with local land use plans.

- (ii) Based on consultation with the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, state the effect of the proposed action on any prime agricultural land.**

Applicant has not received a response to its inquiry dated September 6, 2005 to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service for Jefferson County seeking information regarding this statement. (See Attachment 7.)

While some prime farmland may exist in the vicinity of this project, Applicant feels that the simple removal of track material should not have an adverse impact.

- (iii) If the action affects land or water uses within a designated coastal zone, include the coastal zone information required by 1105.9.**

Applicant has not received a response to its inquiry dated September 6, 2005 to the New York Coastal Zone Management seeking information regarding this statement. (See Attachment 8.)

Applicant feels that the simple removal of track material should not have an adverse impact.

- (iv) If the proposed action is an abandonment, state whether or not the right of way is suitable for alternative public use under 49 U.S.C. 10906 and explain why.**

The properties, proposed to be abandoned, may be suitable for other public purposes, but may be subject to reversionary interests that may affect transfer of title for other than rail purposes.

**(4) ENERGY**

- (i) **Describe the effect of the proposed action on transportation of energy resources.**

Since this line has not been needed or used in recent years for the transportation of coal, Applicant does not anticipate any adverse impact on the future transportation of energy resources.

- (ii) **Describe the effect of the proposed action on recyclable commodities.**

The proposed action will have no effect on the movement and/or recovery of recyclable commodities.

- (iii) **State whether the proposed action will result in an increase or decrease in overall energy efficiency and explain why.**

The proposed action will not result in an increase or decrease in overall energy efficiency.

- (iv) **If the proposed action will cause diversions from rail to motor carriage of more than: (A) 1,000 rail carloads a year; or (B) an average of 50 rail carloads per mile per year for any part of the affected line, quantify the resulting net change in energy consumption and show the data and methodology used to arrive at the figure given.**

There will be no diversion of rail traffic to motor carriage.

**(5) AIR**

- (i) **If the proposed action will result in either: (A) an increase in rail traffic of at least 100% (measured in gross ton miles annually) or an increase of at least eight trains a day on any segment of rail line affected by the proposal, or (B) an increase in rail yard activity of at least 100% (measured by carload activity), or (C) an average increase in truck traffic of more than 10% of the average daily traffic or 50 vehicles a day on any affected road segment, quantify the anticipated effect on air emissions.**

The above thresholds will not be exceeded.

- (ii) **If the proposed action affects a class I or non-attainment area under the Clean Air Act; and will it result in either: (A) an increase in rail traffic of a least 50% (measured in gross ton miles annually) or an increase of at least three trains a day on any segment of rail line, or**

(B) an increase in rail yard activity of a least 20% (measured by carload activity), or (C) an average increase in truck traffic of more than 10% of the average daily traffic or 50 vehicles a day on a given road segment, then state whether any expected increased emissions are within the parameters established by the State Implementation Plan.

The above thresholds will not be exceeded.

- (iii) If transportation of ozone depleting materials (such as nitrogen oxide and freon) is contemplated, identify: the materials and quantity, the frequency of service; safety practices (including any speed restriction); the applicant's safety record (to the extent available) on derailments, accidents and spills; contingency plans to deal with accidental spills; and the likelihood of an accidental release of ozone depleting materials in the event of a collision or derailment.

Not applicable.

#### **(6) NOISE**

If any of the thresholds identified in item (5)(i) of this section are surpassed, state whether the proposed action will cause: (i) an incremental increase in noise levels of three decibels Ldn or more, or (ii) an increase to a noise level of 65 decibels Ldn or greater. If so, identify sensitive receptors (e.g., schools, libraries, hospitals, residences, retirement communities, and nursing homes) in the project area, and quantify the noise increase for these receptors if the thresholds are surpassed.

The above thresholds will not be exceeded.

#### **(7) SAFETY**

- (i) Describe any effects of the proposed action on public health and safety (including vehicle delay time at railroad grade crossings).

There will be no effect on public health and safety as a result of the proposed action.

- (ii) If hazardous materials are expected to be transported, identify: the materials and quantity; the frequency of service; whether chemicals are being transported that, if mixed, could react to form more hazardous compounds; safety practices (including any speed restrictions); the applicant's safety record (to the extent available) on derailments, accidents and hazardous spills; the contingency plans to deal with accidental spills; and the likelihood of an accidental release of hazardous materials.

Not applicable.

- (iii) **If there are any known hazardous waste sites or sites where there have been known hazardous material spills on the right of way, identify the location of those sites and the types of hazardous materials involved.**

Applicant's records do not indicate any hazardous waste sites or sites where there have been hazardous material spills on this line segment.

## **(8) BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

- (i) **Based on consultation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state whether the proposed action is likely to adversely affect endangered or threatened species or areas designated as a critical habitat, and if so, describe the effects.**

Applicant has not received a response to its inquiry of September 6, 2005, to the U. S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service in Cortland, New York, seeking information regarding this statement. (See Attachment 9.)

Based upon Applicant's intention to remove only the track material and the upper layer of ballast, Applicant does not believe that any federally endangered or threatened species will be negatively affected or critical habitats modified if the line is abandoned.

- (ii) **State whether wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National or State parks or forests will be affected, and describe any effects.**

Based upon Applicant's review of the area, the line is not within any wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National or State parks or forests.

## **(9) WATER**

- (i) **Based on consultation with State water quality officials, state whether the proposed action is consistent with applicable Federal, State or local water quality standards. Describe any inconsistencies.**

Applicant has not received a response to its inquiry of September 6, 2005 to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Regional Office in New York, New York or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency State Office in Hudson Falls, New York, requesting information regarding this statement. (See Attachments 10 and 11.)

Any necessary permits or applications will be obtained as well as compliance with conditions or procedures required by regulatory agencies.

- (ii) **Based on consultation with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, state whether permits under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) are required for the proposed action and whether any designated wetlands or 100-year flood plains will be affected. Describe the effects.**

Applicant has not received a response to its inquiry of September 6, 2005 to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in New York, New York, requesting information regarding this statement. (See Attachment 12.)

Applicant is not aware of any designated wetlands or 100-year flood plains within the proposed project.

Upon receiving abandonment authority, removal of material will be accomplished by use of the right of way for access, along with existing public and private crossings, and no new access roads are contemplated. We do not intend to disturb any of the underlying roadbed or perform any activities that would cause sedimentation or erosion of the soil, and do not anticipate any dredging or use of fill in the removal of the track material. The crossties and/or other debris will be transported away from the rail line and will not be discarded along the right of way nor be placed or left in streams or wetlands, or along the banks of such waterways. Also, during track removal, appropriate measures will be implemented to prevent or control spills from fuels, lubricants or any other pollutant materials from entering any waterways. Based upon this course of action, Applicant does not believe a permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act will be required.

- (iii) **State whether permits under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1342) are required for the proposed action. (Applicants should contact the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency or the state environmental protection or equivalent agency if they are unsure whether such permits are required).**

Applicant has not received a response to its inquiry of September 6, 2005 to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Regional Office in New York, New York or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency State Office in Hudson Falls, New York, requesting information regarding this statement. (See Attachments 10 and 11.)

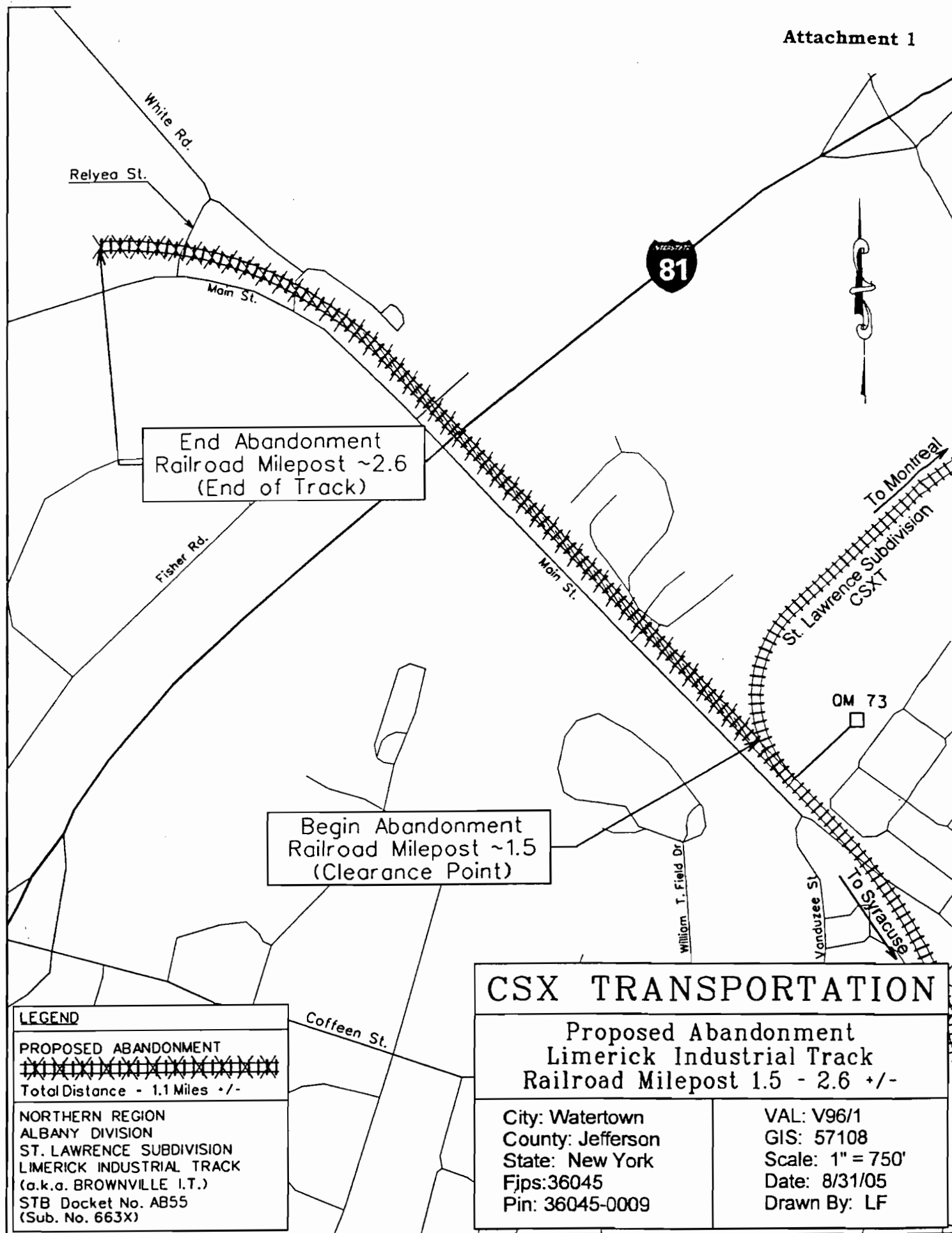
Any necessary permits or applications will be obtained as well as compliance with conditions or procedures required by regulatory agencies.

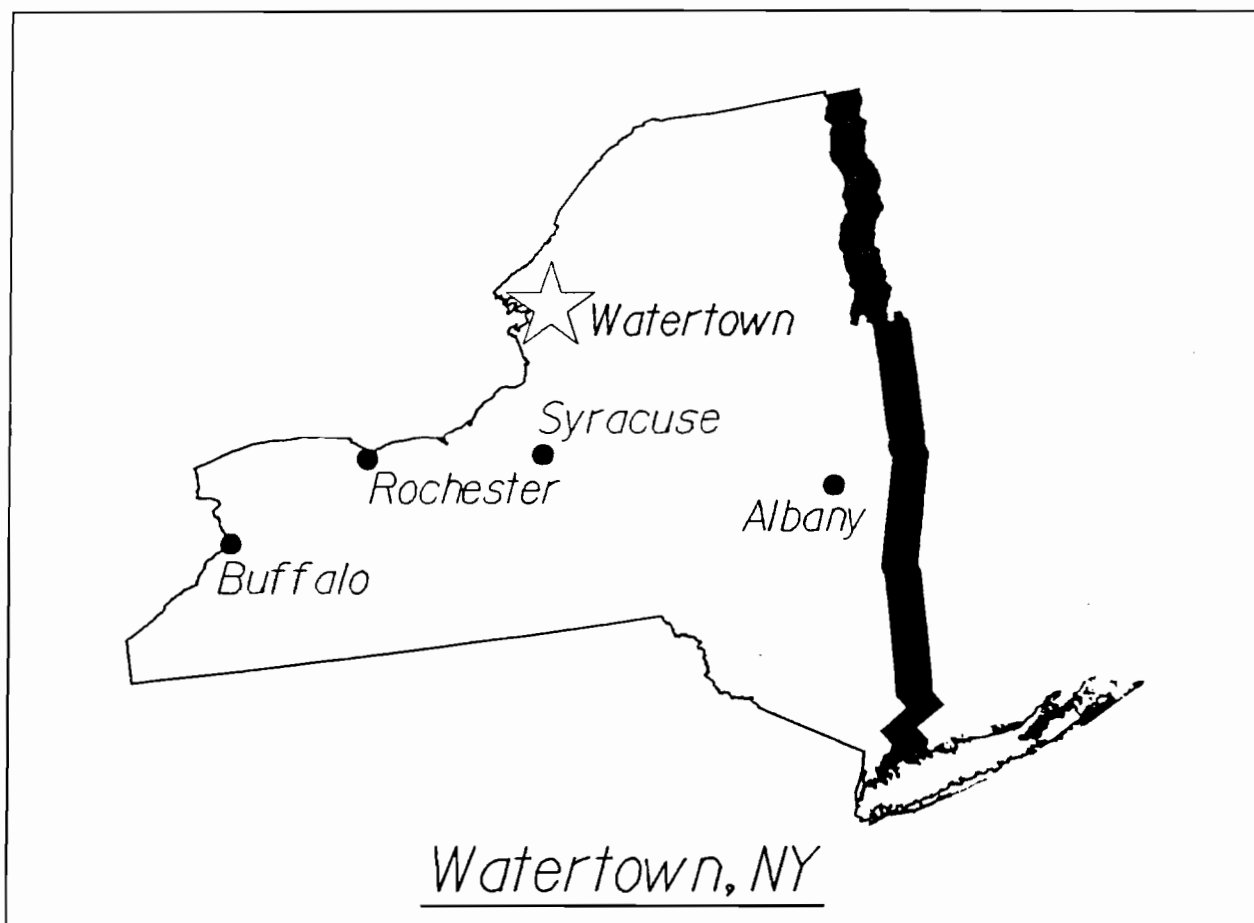
## **10. MITIGATION**

**Describe any actions that are proposed to mitigate adverse environmental impacts, indicating why the proposed mitigation is appropriate.**

Applicant does not believe there will be any adverse environmental impacts in the project area as a result of this abandonment. However, if any adverse impacts are discovered, Applicant will comply with State and Federal regulations and obtain any necessary permits required.







AREA MAP  
Proposed Abandonment  
1.1 Miles (5564 +/- Feet)  
Watertown, Jefferson County, NY

NORTHERN REGION - ALBANY DIVISION - ST. LAWRENCE SUBDIVISION - LIMERICK IND. TRK.



Dave Geraci  
Manager - Network Rationalization

500 Water Street - J200  
Jacksonville, FL 32202  
Phone: (904) 359-1086  
FAX: (904) 359-1111  
E-Mail: Dave\_Geraci@CSX.com

**Attachment 3**

September 6, 2005

Mr. Bruce Armstrong, Director  
Jefferson County Planning Department  
175 Arsenal Street  
Watertown, NY 13601

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

This action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations 49 C.F.R. 1105.7(3)(i) require that we develop a response to the following statement:

"Based on consultation with local and/or regional planning agencies and/or a review of the official planning documents prepared by such agencies, state whether the proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans. Describe any inconsistencies."

I would appreciate your advice as to the existence of a long-range comprehensive planning map for Jefferson County and the line's relationship to such planning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Geraci", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Attachment

**Attachment 4**

September 6, 2005

Mr. Ken Mix  
Watertown Planning Department  
245 Washington Street  
Suite 245  
Watertown, NY 13601

Dear Mr. Mix:


Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

This action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations 49 C.F.R. 1105.7(3)(i) require that we develop a response to the following statement:

"Based on consultation with local and/or regional planning agencies and/or a review of the official planning documents prepared by such agencies, state whether the proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans. Describe any inconsistencies."

I would appreciate your advice as to the existence of a long-range comprehensive planning map for the City of Watertown and the line's relationship to such planning.

Sincerely,



Attachment

**Attachment 5**

September 6, 2005

Mr. Larry Longway, Supervisor  
Pamelia Planning Department  
25859 NY State Route 37  
Watertown, NY 13601

Dear Mr. Longway:

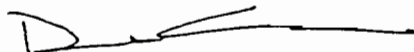
Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

This action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations 49 C.F.R. 1105.7(3)(i) require that we develop a response to the following statement:

"Based on consultation with local and/or regional planning agencies and/or a review of the official planning documents prepared by such agencies, state whether the proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans. Describe any inconsistencies."

I would appreciate your advice as to the existence of a long-range comprehensive planning map for the City of Pamelia and the line's relationship to such planning.

Sincerely,



Attachment

**Attachment 6**

September 6, 2005

Mr. Stephen Macauley, Mayor  
Village of Glen Park  
642 Main Street  
Glen Park, NY 13601

Dear Mr. Macauley:

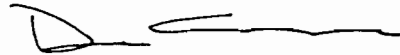
Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

This action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations 49 C.F.R. 1105.7(3)(i) require that we develop a response to the following statement:

"Based on consultation with local and/or regional planning agencies and/or a review of the official planning documents prepared by such agencies, state whether the proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans. Describe any inconsistencies."

I would appreciate your advice as to the existence of a long-range comprehensive planning map for the Village of Glen Park and the line's relationship to such planning.

Sincerely,



Attachment

**Attachment 7**

September 6, 2005

USDA - NRCS  
441 S. Salina St.  
Suite 354  
The Galleries of Syracuse  
Syracuse, NY 13202

Gentlemen:

Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

This action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations 49 C.F.R. 1105.7(3)(ii) require that we develop a response to the following statement:

"Based on consultation with the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, state the effect of the proposed action on any prime agricultural land."

Please advise if any of the land contiguous to CSXT's line in the project area is classified as prime agriculture land.

Sincerely,



Attachment



Dave Geraci  
Manager - Network Rationalization

500 Water Street - J200  
Jacksonville, FL 32202  
Phone: (904) 359-1086  
FAX: (904) 359-1111  
E-Mail: Dave\_Geraci@CSX.com

**Attachment 8**

September 6, 2005

Coastal Management  
Secretary of State's Office  
41 State Street  
Albany, NY 12231-0001

Gentlemen:

Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

This action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations require expanded environmental information in connection with rail lines, which are subject to abandonment. One of these is to determine if a designated coastal zone management area is involved, and, if so, if the proposed action is consistent with the affected State's Coastal Zone Management Program.

I would appreciate your advising if the removal of the rail would have an effect on your program. It is CSXT's intention to simply remove the metal material from the top layer of gravel ballast, and to preserve the existing routes of water flow and drainage. We do not anticipate any dredging or use of fill in the removal of the track material.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Geraci", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Attachment





E-Mail

Dave Geraci  
Manager - Network Rationalization

September 6, 2005

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Commission  
New York Field Office  
3817 Luker Road  
Cortland, NY 13045

Gentlemen:

Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

The action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal C.F.R. 1105.7 (8) (i) and (ii) require that we develop responses to the following questions:

- (i) Based on consultation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff, the proposed action is likely to adversely affect endangered or threatened species or areas designated as a critical habitat, and if so, describe the effects.
- (ii) State whether wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National or State parks, will be affected, and describe any effects.

The removal of CSXT's rail material will be accomplished by use of the right-of-way along with existing public and private crossings, and no new access road will be constructed. We do not intend to disturb any of the underlying roadbeds and do not intend dredging or use of fill in the removal of the track material. The crossties will be transported away from the rail line and will not be discarded along the right-of-way. They will be placed or left in streams or wetlands, or along the banks of such watercourses. Upon removal, appropriate measures will be implemented to prevent or control the release of lubricants or any other materials from entering any watercourses.

Based upon the above described actions, we would appreciate your concurrence in our position that there would be no adverse impact to any federally-listed species, threatened species, critical habitats, wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National parks, or forests.

We would appreciate your comments; and, if you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Attachment





500 Water Street - J200  
Jacksonville, FL 32202  
Phone: (904) 359-1086  
FAX: (904) 359-1111  
E-Mail: Dave\_Geraci@CSX.com

Dave Geraci  
Manager - Network Rationalization

Attachment 9

September 6, 2005

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Commission  
New York Field Office  
3817 Luker Road  
Cortland, NY 13045

Gentlemen:

Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

The action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations 49 C.F.R. 1105.7 (8) (i) and (ii) require that we develop responses to the following statements:

(i) Based on consultation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service state whether the proposed action is likely to adversely affect endangered or threatened species or areas designated as a critical habitat, and if so, describe the effects.

(ii) State whether wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National or State parks or forests will be affected, and describe any effects.

The removal of CSXT's rail material will be accomplished by use of the right of way for access, along with existing public and private crossings, and no new access roads are contemplated. We do not intend to disturb any of the underlying roadbeds and do not anticipate any dredging or use of fill in the removal of the track material. The crossties and/or other debris will be transported away from the rail line and will not be discarded along the right of way, nor be placed or left in streams or wetlands, or along the banks of such waterways. During track removal, appropriate measures will be implemented to prevent or control spills from fuels, lubricants or any other materials from entering any watercourses.

Based upon the above described actions, we would appreciate your concurrence in CSXT's position that there would be no adverse impact to any federally-listed endangered or threatened species, critical habitats, wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National or State parks, or forests.

We would appreciate your comments; and, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Attachment



500 Water Street - J200  
Jacksonville, FL 32202  
Phone: (904) 359-1086  
FAX: (904) 359-1111  
E-Mail: Dave\_Geraci@CSX.com

Dave Geraci  
Manager - Network Rationalization

Attachment 10

September 6, 2005

U.S. EPA - Region 2  
290 Broadway,  
New York, NY 10007-1866

Gentlemen:

Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

This action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations 49 C.F.R. 1105.7 (9) (i) and (iii) require that we develop a response to the following statements:

(i) "Based on consultation with State Water quality officials, state whether the proposed action is consistent with applicable Federal, State or local water quality standards. Describe any inconsistencies."

(iii) State whether permits under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act 33 U.S.C. 1342 are required for the proposed action."

There are no refueling or maintenance areas within the project area. The removal of CSXT's rail material will be accomplished by use of the right of way for access, along with existing public and private crossings, and no new access roads are contemplated. We do not intend to disturb any of the underlying roadbeds and do not anticipate any dredging or use of fill in the removal of the track material. The crossties and/or other debris will be transported away from the rail line and will not be discarded along the right of way, nor be placed or left in streams or wetlands, or along the banks of such waterways. During track removal, appropriate measures will be implemented to prevent or control spills from fuels, lubricants or any other pollutant materials from entering any watercourses.

Based upon the above described actions, we would appreciate receiving your concurrence with CSXT's position that the proposed project is consistent with applicable Federal, State and local water quality standards, and that no permits under Section 402 are required at this time.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Geraci", written over a horizontal line.

Attachment



Dave Geraci  
Manager - Network Rationalization

500 Water Street - J200  
Jacksonville, FL 32202  
Phone: (904) 359-1086  
FAX: (904) 359-1111  
E-Mail: Dave\_Geraci@CSX.com

Attachment 11

September 6, 2005

U. S. EPA  
Hudson River Field Office  
421 Lower Main Street  
Hudson Falls, NY 12839

Gentlemen:

Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

This action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations 49 C.F.R. 1105.7 (9) (i) and (iii) require that we develop a response to the following statements:

(i) "Based on consultation with State Water quality officials, state whether the proposed action is consistent with applicable Federal, State or local water quality standards. Describe any inconsistencies."

(iii) State whether permits under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act 33 U.S.C. 1342 are required for the proposed action."

There are no refueling or maintenance areas within the project area. The removal of CSXT's rail material will be accomplished by use of the right of way for access, along with existing public and private crossings, and no new access roads are contemplated. We do not intend to disturb any of the underlying roadbeds and do not anticipate any dredging or use of fill in the removal of the track material. The crossties and/or other debris will be transported away from the rail line and will not be discarded along the right of way, nor be placed or left in streams or wetlands, or along the banks of such waterways. During track removal, appropriate measures will be implemented to prevent or control spills from fuels, lubricants or any other pollutant materials from entering any watercourses.

Based upon the above described actions, we would appreciate receiving your concurrence with CSXT's position that the proposed project is consistent with applicable Federal, State and local water quality standards, and that no permits under Section 402 are required at this time.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Attachment

**Attachment 12**

September 6, 2005

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Jacob K. Javits Federal Building  
26 Federal Plaza, Room 2109  
New York, NY 10278-0090

Gentlemen:

Please be advised that CSX Transportation, Inc. is considering abandonment of a portion of its rail line near Watertown, Jefferson County, New York as depicted on the attached map.

This action requires Surface Transportation Board approval and Federal Regulations 49 C.F.R. 1105.7(9)(ii) require that we develop a response to the following statement:

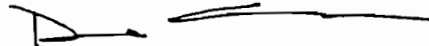
"Based on consultation with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, state whether permits under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) are required for the proposed action and whether any designated wetlands or 100 year flood plains will be affected. Describe the effects."

It is our opinion that there will be no impact on designated wetlands or 100-year flood plains because our intent at this time is to only remove CSXT's metal track material, crossties and perhaps the upper layer of ballast, and to preserve the existing routes of water flow and drainage. We do not intend to disturb any of the underlying roadbeds or perform any activities that would cause sedimentation or erosion of the soil, and we do not anticipate any dredging or use of fill in the removal of the track material. The track removal will be accomplished by use of the right of way for access, along with existing public and private crossings, and no new access roads are contemplated. The crossties and/or other debris will be transported away from the rail line and will not be discarded along the right of way, nor be placed or left in streams or wetlands, or along the banks of such waterways.

Based upon the above described actions, we would appreciate your concurrence in CSXT's position that there would be no adverse impact on wetlands or 100-year flood plains, and that no permits under Section 404 will be required.

We would appreciate your comments; and, if you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,



Attachment